
Blighted Property Review Committee
Thursday, August 16, 2012
Certification & Determination Hearing
Meeting Report

Mr. Olsen called the Determination Hearing to order at 6:09 pm. He announced that a quorum was present.

Mr. Olsen announced that the purpose of the hearing was to consider if the conditions of the properties on the agenda met the conditions set by the Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law of 1945, as amended and the City of Reading Blighted Property Review Committee Ordinance, and could be certified or determined as blighted.

BPRC Attendance: L. Olsen, R. Corcoran, H. Urena, M. Wolfe, D. Luckey, G. Seidel, W. Bealer

Staff Attendance: L. Kelleher, T. Butler, Esq., M. Reinhart

Mr. Olsen asked Ms. Butler, attorney from the City's Law Department, to conduct the hearing. Ms. Butler explained the hearing procedures and summarized the blighted conditions as set forth in the City's Blighted Property ordinance. She provided a copy of the property packet to all property owners and representatives present.

Ms. Butler stated that the conditions at **663 S. 17 ½ Street** no longer meet the blighted criteria set forth and she recommended that the board vote to remove this property from the list.

Mr. Seidel moved, seconded by Mr. Urena, to remove 663 S. 17th ½ Street from the blighted list. The motion was approved unanimously.

Ms. Butler stated that the next three properties under consideration were tabled at previous meetings. She stated that the following property no longer meets the BPRC criteria and she recommended removing it from the process:

- **1302 Butler St, owned by Gary Gettiger & Dolores Bennicoff, 1302 Butler St Reading Pa 19601, Purchased Nov 1998**

Mr. Corcoran moved, seconded by Mr. Bealer, to remove 1302 Butler Street from the process. The motion was approved unanimously.

CERTIFICATION HEARING

Ms. Butler stated that the following two properties will be considered for certification.

- 1. 646 Brookline St., owned by US National Bank, 211 N Front St Harrisburg Pa 17101, purchased April 2012**

Ms. Butler asked the property owner or his representative to step to the podium. No one responded. She entered the property packet into the record as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class and certified mail on June 12, 2012
- Notice posted on the property on June 28, 2012
- Delinquent water charges totaling \$977.74
- Delinquent Taxes n/a
- Electric off
- Gas off
- No Water Service since December 2011
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling Charges totaling \$585.95
- Codes - Unpaid housing permits
- Trades - no structural deficiencies

Ms. Butler opened the floor for public comment. No one stepped forward.

Ms. Wolfe moved, seconded by Mr. Corcoran, to certify 646 Brookline Street as blighted. The motion was approved unanimously.

- 2. 2237 Raymond Ave, owned by McCrae Boykins Jr, 2237 Raymond Ave, purchased April 1997**

Ms. Butler asked the property owner or his representative to step to the podium. Josie and McCrae Boykins stepped to the podium. Ms. Butler entered the property packet into the record as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class and certified mail on June 12, 2012
- Notice posted on the property on June 28, 2012
- Delinquent water charges totaling \$2740.32
- Delinquent Taxes 2009, 2010 and 2011
- Electric off
- Gas n/a
- No Water Service since February 2011
- Codes - high grass and weeds and work order for high grass and weed removal \$122.19
- Delinquent Recycling Charges totaling \$187.09
- Trades - no structural deficiencies

Mrs. Boykins stated that the property has been vacant since she and her husband separated. She stated that the goal is to clear the delinquencies and rehabilitate the property so it can be sold. Mr. Boykins stated that he had been in a payment plan for his delinquent taxes, until he encountered health problems. He said that he intends to rehabilitate the property and sell it.

Ms. Kelleher issued the oath to Mr. and Mrs. Boykins

Ms. Butler opened the floor for public comment. No one stepped forward.

Ms. Wolfe moved, seconded by Mr. Bealer, to certify 2237 Raymond Ave. as blighted. The motion was approved unanimously.

DETERMINATION HEARING

Ms. Butler stated that the Determination hearing will now be conducted.

- 1. 132 Crestmont St., owned by Norman Pitz, of 132 Crestmont St., Reading, no purchase date listed.**

Ms. Butler asked the property owner or his representative to step to the podium. Mr. Pitz and his attorney Tom Beaver, Esq. stepped to the podium. Ms. Kelleher issued the oath to Mr. Pitz and Attorney Beaver.

Ms. Butler entered the property packet into the record as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class and certified mail on June 28, 2012
- Notice posted on the property on June 28, 2012
- Delinquent water charges totaling \$2191.52
- Delinquent Taxes n/a
- Electric off
- Gas off
- No Water Service since June 2008
- Codes - Notice of Violation damaged gutters and down spouting and \$560 in unpaid QoL Tickets
- Delinquent Recycling Charges totaling \$187.06
- Trades - no structural deficiencies
- \$348.57 trash and recycling liens

Attorney Beaver stated that Mr. Pitz in the process of rehabbing the property. He stated that Mr. Pitz plans to repair the roof and gutters. He stated that Mr. Pitz is performing to the best of his ability.

Ms. Butler opened the floor for public comment. No one stepped forward.

Mr. Corcoran moved, seconded by Mr. Urena, to certify 132 Crestmont St. as blighted. The motion was approved unanimously.

- 2. 456 Douglass St, owned by Colin and Loraine Gray, 456 Douglass St, purchased Dec 2004**

Ms. Butler stated that there were problems with this property packet. She recommended tabling this property.

Mr. Seidel moved, seconded by Mr. Corcoran, to table 456 Douglass St. The motion was approved unanimously.

- 3. 930 N 5th St, owned by Julian A & Letitia L Young, of 932 Rose Street Reading, Purchase Date Jan 1998**

Ms. Butler stated that this property was recently sold to Jenny Tapia Anahi & Pablo Guzman, who are not present. However, she stated that Julian Young, the former owner is present and will comment. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Mr. Young.

Ms. Butler entered the property packet into the record as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class and certified mail on July 5, 2012
- Notice posted on the property on July 5, 2012
- Delinquent water charges \$89.27
- Delinquent Taxes 2009 and 2011
- Electric on
- Gas on
- Water on
- Trades deterioration of the porch to the point of near collapse
- Codes Notice of Violation for deterioration, broken window, peeling paint, no rental permit, 6 unpaid QoL tickets \$595 and a Citation for the deteriorated porch
- Delinquent Recycling Charges totaling \$1103.12
- Trades no structural deficiencies
- \$1840.77 trash and recycling liens 1999-2010 and \$4507.71 property taxes liens 2009, 2010 and 2011

Mr. Young stated that he moved away from the property three years ago when he separated from his wife. He stated that his wife remained living at the property for some period of time. He stated that the new owner has started working on the property. He stated that the property was sold through ReMAX.

Ms. Butler stated that the paper work shows the property was a short sale and went through a title company. The committee questioned why the delinquencies were not cleared at settlement.

Mr. Corcoran moved, seconded by Mr. Bealer, to table 930 N 5th St. and to recheck the property's delinquency status. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. 231 Walnut St, owned by Maria and Carlos Lopez, 231 Walnut St, Reading, purchased Sept 2007

Ms. Butler called the property owners to the podium. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Mr. and Mrs. Lopez, with assistance from translator Josie Boykins.

Ms. Butler entered the property packet into the record as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class and certified mail on June 28, 2012
- Notice posted on the property on June 28, 2012
- Delinquent water charges n/a
- Delinquent Taxes 2009, 2010 and 2011
- Electric on
- Gas n/a
- Water on
- Trades - deterioration of the porch to the point of near collapse
- Codes - Notice of Violation peeling paint, damaged roof and drainage system.
- Delinquent Recycling Charges totaling \$1616.96
- Trades no structural deficiencies
- \$875.06 trash and recycling liens and \$1159.24 property taxes 2010 and 2011

With assistance from the translator, the property owners stated that Mr. Lopez resides at the property and that water enters the interior when rain events occur. They stated that they are working with NHS. They distributed a letter from NHS which stated that the property is included in the facelift program this year.

Ms. Reinhart reported that their NHS application was submitted to NHS and is under review.

Ms. Butler inquired if Mr. Lopez has identification showing that he resides at the property. Mr. Lopez stated that the oil bills are in his name and that his Photo Identification Card is in his name. Mr. Lucky suggested tabling this property so the delinquencies can be rechecked.

Mr. Corcoran moved, seconded by Mr. Bealer, to determine 231 Walnut St. as blighted and to recheck the property's delinquency status. The motion was approved unanimously.

126 N 3rd St, owned by Melissa Santiago of 139 1/2 N 3rd St Reading PA 19601, purchased Nov 2010

Ms. Butler called the representative of the property owner to the podium. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Ada Rosario.

Ms. Butler entered the property packet into the record as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class and certified mail on June 28, 2012
- Notice posted on the property on June 28, 2012
- Delinquent water charges \$57.04
- Delinquent Taxes n/a
- Electric off
- Gas off December 2010
- Water on
- Trades - no structural deficiency
- Codes - Citation deteriorated wood and unprotected exterior 2005 and 2012
- Delinquent Recycling Charges n/a
- Liens n/a

Ms. Butler noted that the property owner requested more time to correct the Codes issues in May; however, that may have been related to the citation and not the BPRC process.

Ms. Rosario stated that the property was given to the owner by the owner's brother. The owner now wishes to transfer ownership to Ms. Rosario, the mother. She stated that the property owner is in Puerto Rico and has made some improvements but cannot afford to do more. Ms. Rosario stated that she was recently employed and plans to make improvements. She noted that the heat is provided by oil and electric. Ms. Butler noted that as the electric is turned off, the heating component provided by electric is insufficient.

Mr. Urena stated that he will abstain from the vote due to his relationship with this family.

Ms. Wolfe moved, seconded by Mr. Bealer, to determine 126 N 3rd St. as a blighted property. The motion was approved with six votes and one abstention.

Ms. Butler stated that none of the other property owners are present and there is no one seated in the audience to provide public comment, therefore, the remaining properties listed on the agenda will be handled in the Consent Agenda format.

Ms. Butler entered the property packets into the record. In summary:

1. 2270 Northmont Blvd. owned by Glenn D. Feick, 2270 Northmont Blvd, Reading 19605, purchased March 1983, Water off, no electric service, Codes violations, delinquent recycling, liens for work orders and water, structural deficiencies at the porch area.
2. 1502 Luzerne St., owned by Wayne and Mattlin Locus, of 1502 Luzerne St, Reading, purchase date Nov 1999, water service off, Electric service off, property maintenance violations, delinquent recycling; liens work orders and recycling, structural concerns due to eh condition of the roof
3. 631 Park Ave, owned by Kathleen Shollenberger, of 631 Park Ave, Reading, purchase date June 2004, water Service off, electric service off, gas service off, property maintenance violations
4. 401 Oley Street, owned by Christine Talarico of PO Box 7004 Wyomissing, purchased Aug 2005, water service off, delinquent taxes, electric service off, codes violations, delinquent recycling, tax liens
5. 122 N 8th St., owner by William Woolworth III, of 122 N 8th St, Reading, purchase date Feb 2010, delinquent water, codes violations bowed garage walls
6. 7 Nottingham Ct., Isidro Reyes-Mondragon of 7 Nottingham Ct., Reading, purchase date, purchased March 1998, water service off, electric service on, property maintenance violations, delinquent recycling, recycling liens
7. 418 Douglass St, owned by Daren Bolten, 1110 Caton Ave Apt 8 Brooklyn NY 11218, No purchase date listed, delinquent water, delinquent taxes, codes violations, delinquent recycling, recycling, work order and tax liens
8. 251 N 6th St, owned by 251 N 6th St Realty Corp, purchased May 2004, water service off, delinquent taxes, codes citations and QoL tickets, taxes and work order liens
9. 144 N 2nd St, owned by Kim Bailey, PO Box 276 Reading PA 19603, purchased April 1995, water Service off, electric service off
10. 146 N 2nd St, owned by Robin Rovell Reber, 1415 Scott St Reading Pa 19607, purchased Feb 2011, water service off, electric service off, gas off, delinquent taxes, codes violations, delinquent recycling, and QoL tickets, tax liens
11. 741 Neversink Alley, owned by Antonio Falu, 725 McIlvain St Reading PA 19602, purchased Feb 2008, water service off, electric service off, citation failure to demolish or rehab, delinquent trash and recycling, nuisance abatement, tax, water, trash and recycling

liens

12. 743 Neversink Alley, owned by Antonio Falu, 725 McIlvain St Reading PA 19602, purchased Nov 2005, water service off, delinquent taxes, electric off, property maintenance citations failure to demolish or rehab and secure, delinquent trash and recycling, tax, water, trash and recycling liens

Ms. Butler again asked if the owners of any of the listed properties were present. No one responded.

Ms. Butler opened the floor for public comment. No one stepped forward.

Ms. Butler stated that each of these properties meets the blight criteria.

BPRC Vote

Mr. Corcoran moved, seconded by Mr. Urena, to approve the determination of these properties as blighted. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Corcoran moved, seconded by Mr. Urena to adjourn the determination hearing.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher, Secretary